7.—Reforms in the Legislative Council, &c.

63. There is one important message which I am commanded by His Highness the Maharaja to announce to this Assembly and which I may refer to at this stage. The Representative Assembly was brought into existence in 1881, that is, in the very first year after the Rendition. While there are representatives on it of the highest ability and intelligence, the Assembly is, in the main, composed of representatives from the districts and the taluks. At present, it meets once a year and, considering the size and resources of our State, it is too large a body to meet oftener. No practical scheme has yet been put forward to show in what direction and in what manner the usefulness of this Assembly can be enhanced. It may be advantageous, at this session, to consider questions pertaining to the composition of the Assembly, the methods of electing members thereto, its functions and the system of transacting business. If the members discuss these questions and make known their views, the same will be submitted to His Highness for his gracious consideration.

64. His Highness has decided to increase the number of representatives from this Assembly on the Legislative Council from two to four and also to nominate eight representatives from it on the Economic Conference.

As you are doubtless aware, our Legislative Council is based on the model of the British Indian Act of 1861 ; but, as that Act has been revised twice since that year, His Highness thinks that the representative character of our Council might be safely improved so that it may be nearer the standard of the Councils in British India.

The local Legislative Council consists of 15 to 18 members at present. This number will be increased to 24 in future. Of these, four will be nominated, as already stated, on the recommendation of this Assembly, four by territorial representation from the districts, ten will be officials and six nominated members. There will thus be eight elected representatives of the people instead of two, the present number. It is necessary that the members nominated on the recommendation of this Assembly or of the districts should possess a sufficient knowledge of the English language to be able to take part in the proceedings of the Legislative Council.

His Highness has been pleased to accord to the Council, but with definite limitations in the early stages, the privileges of Budget discussion and interpellation. The limitations are necessary because our resources and establishment are limited and the time of the officials is already much taken up by the periodical functions.

The interpellations will not exceed twelve questions at each session, and the nature of the questions to be admitted will depend, among other considerations, on the measure of support accorded to them by the members. Suitable rules will be framed for the purpose after the Legislative Council has been amended.

65. These changes, which His Highness the Maharaja has been graciously pleased to sanction, will enable the representatives of His Highness' subjects to be associated in the Councils of the administration and bring their influence to bear, for all good ends, on the policy and activities of Government.

66. I need not repeat here that on His Highness the Maharaja rests the ultimate responsibility for the good government of the country; and he trusts he may rely on the loyalty, wisdom and public spirit of his subjects, that the privileges now accorded to them will be exercised with caution and moderation for the promotion of the good government of the country and the permanent well-being of his subjects.

8.—Two Notable Events.

H. H. the Yuvaraja's European Tour.

67. One of the most hopeful signs of awakening and progress of the country is the example set to us by the visit of His Highness the Yuvaraja to Europe. The Yuvaraja, who has been travelling abroad for the past six months with a staff of three officers and a young gentleman of the Ursu community, has just been welcomed home with great warmth and enthusiasm. In his travels in Europe, the Yuvaraja spent a life of ceaseless toil,